



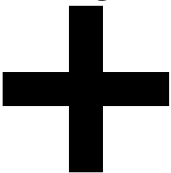
feeling good

Do you want to feel happy?

Do you want to have an inner strength
that no one can take away from you?

Then try some of the following:

**Positive
thinking**



What you say to yourself in your head is very important. If you have negative thoughts, catch yourself and turn the thoughts around. Over time negative thoughts affect how you feel about yourself. Get into the habit of noticing what you're saying to yourself.

Practise separating “What I am” from “What I do”. (Doing is not being.) For example, from: “I am stupid” to “What I said was stupid.”
“I am clumsy” to “What I did was clumsy.”
“I am hopeless” to “I’m not very good at doing that.”

Changing how you think about yourself takes time but does work!

[Accepting yourself]

It's natural to like some things about yourself more than others. Try to accept yourself – both the good things and the points you don't feel happy about.

If you want to do some things differently, do them a bit at a time to make it easier. Give it time, and reward yourself every time you make some progress. If you fail, accept that and encourage yourself to not give up, to try again.

Most people would agree that you should be kind to other people, but we sometimes forget to be kind to ourselves. Sometimes it's too easy to take the good things about yourself for granted and to worry over your mistakes.

Encouraging and Praising yourself

You don't have to wait for someone else to give you praise and encouragement – you can do it yourself:

Give yourself simple but real praise (“I did that well”) and self-encouragement as often as you can. Do it over little things you do every day and usually take for granted. For example, some days just getting out of bed is a major achievement.

If you feel discouraged, stop and think what you are saying to yourself, eg “I just can't do this.” Change this to an encouraging statement: “If I just stick with it a little longer, I'll get it done.”

It's natural to want to compare yourself with other people, but try to concentrate on being yourself and liking who you are. Avoid comparing yourself with someone who is really good at something that you're not. Everyone has their own strengths, things that they're good at.

Expressing yourself

People sometimes think their feelings are either “good” or “bad”. For example, being happy is good, being sad is bad.

In fact, no one can be happy all the time.

No feelings are either right or wrong. They just are.

It is better to accept feelings than to push them away, because there is always a reason for how you feel. Your feelings give you information about what you like and don't like and what you want and don't want. You can use your feelings to help you make decisions.

Even if you know it's good to express your feelings, it can still be a hard thing to do. People can respond badly, which can make you feel worse. Why? Because they've probably been encouraged to believe that their own feelings are not OK and they treat other people the same way. Or they are scared of their own and other people's feelings.

Sharing feelings builds stronger friendships and relationships, so it is worth making an effort. Be honest about your feelings. When someone asks you “How are you going?” and you're feeling stink, tell them. Express your feelings in words to yourself or others. Say how you're feeling clearly and directly. When you are on your own, express your feelings by doing something creative like music or art, or by having a cry, writing your feelings down, hitting your pillow or shouting out loud.

Treating Yourself Well

Treating yourself well involves getting used to being relaxed about yourself and being kind to yourself. You can do this by giving yourself

gifts such as doing something you enjoy, for example, listening to your favourite music; reading; playing sport; going out and having a good time; spending time with a good friend or family; giving yourself small treats that you wouldn't normally get.

Treating yourself well means listening to your mind, your body and your feelings. It means that if you're feeling upset, tired or sick, you look after yourself in the same way you would a good friend and don't try to push yourself too much.

Some ways to deal with Peer Pressure

If you don't feel like going with the crowd, then be strong and say so. This isn't easy at times, but you'll feel good about yourself if you make your own decisions. Say no clearly and firmly. Repeat yourself if people keep hassling you. It can help to say why you don't want to do something. However, you don't have to give a reason. Don't give in once you've decided that you don't want to do something. People will lose respect for you if they know they can always make you change your mind. Remind yourself at the time that if you go ahead and do something that you really don't want to do, you probably won't enjoy yourself. You may end up feeling worried and grumpy.

Dealing with **PRESSURE** to Conform

Being Happy by yourself

Spending time alone gives you a chance to get to know yourself better. This can be scary at first, but over time it becomes less weird and more enjoyable. Time away from everyone gives you a chance to have space in your head to think about who you are becoming and how you're feeling about what's going on in your life. You can sort things out, work out what to do about things and just enjoy your own company. Start by doing something you really enjoy, where it's good not to be distracted by other people.

Everywhere you go, there will be people who put pressure on you to fit in with them and be like them.

A lot of the time, you'll like the same things your friends like and you'll want to do the same things they do. If you get the feeling you'd be dropped as a friend if you didn't always do what others are doing, then you're being pressured to conform.

When people ask you to do things that you don't want to do, you may feel pressure to say yes. Why? Because you may be scared that they won't like you or will reject you if you don't do what they want.

To deal with this, give yourself some time to think about what's happening in a situation before you join in. Try finding one friend and asking them what they think. You may find that they feel the same way you do and were just conforming because they were too scared to speak up as well.

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